

through in their stories and dances. Many Native American stories give explanations for things like animal traits or something they didn't understand. Listen to see what this story explains. Read aloud "The First Fire" from Cherokee Animal Tales book. Discuss what the story explains.

2. Divide into groups to choreograph the story; each group will create movement for one section of the story. (Divide students into 7 groups and assign each group a part of the story). They may refer to story chart or index cards to recall details for their part. (Parts: 1) Thunders who sent lightning; 2) Raven; 3) Screech owl; 4) Hooting owl and horned owl; 5) Little black racer; 6) Climber; 7) Water spider). Ask students to create a short dance using all the details about their character from the story. Try to make it unique—don't go for the obvious. Monitor progress as the groups work, giving suggestions and feedback as needed. When groups are ready, tell them that the "council" in the story will be performed all together, using the toe-step with a heart beat rhythm (A basic Native American dance step). Practice with the drum beat moving in personal space around the room.
3. Performance: Arrange groups in one large circle in the order the characters occur in the story. Remind them that Native Americans always show respect for the earth and animals so they are expected to show respect for the same and for each other by performing the dance with concentration and focus and without talking. For the council at the beginning and the end of the story, everyone stands in the circle, facing counterclockwise. All together with drum beat, take 12 toe-heel steps moving ccw, then sit down. Performance goes in story order: Thunders; council; raven; screech owl; hooting and horned owls; black racer; climber; council; water spider.
4. Applaud for each other after entire dance is finished. Ask students what they liked about parts of the dance other than their own.

Assessment: (See Assessment Item that aligns with this Lesson)

Use a checklist (see Assessment Item for the Checklist) to observe students during group work and performance, and check off items as they are observed. An informal discussion after the performance can be used to check for understanding and to compare choreographic choices that groups made. Checklist can be used to conference with individual students.

Special Considerations:

If you wish to extend this topic into further lessons, the students could write their own legends that explain an animal characteristic or trait (integrating Science and English Language Arts objectives) and create dances about those. Another option is to use Native American picture symbols: Explore creating abstract movements that express different symbols and then write a legend using the picture symbols and choreograph that.